

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension or Revocation)
of the Educator Certificate of)
Tammy M. Copeland)
Certificate 172054)

CONSENT ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 12, 2006. On October 27, 2005, the State Department of Education (Department) sent notice of the possible suspension of Tammy M. Copeland's educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. Ms. Copeland requested a hearing, but subsequently agreed to waive her right to a hearing and to accept a public reprimand, to be issued contingent upon Ms. Copeland's participation in appropriate counseling, as determined by a licensed professional counselor. After considering the evidence presented by the Department, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Ms. Copeland.

Tammy M.
Copeland

Initial here

Date _____

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Copeland holds a valid South Carolina certificate and has over twelve years of teaching and administrative experience. During the 2004-2005 school year, Ms. Copeland was employed by Lexington County School District One and was assigned to Saxe Gotha Elementary School as an assistant principal. Ms. Copeland resigned from her employment, effective June 30, 2005, following an investigation into allegations that Ms. Copeland contaminated candy that was

routinely eaten by her principal, and which was accessible to others in her office. Ms. Copeland denied contaminating the candy and no criminal charges were filed.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-150 (2004), S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58. Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). The Board finds that the evidence presented supports its conclusion that just cause exists for the issuance of a public reprimand to Ms. Copeland for unprofessional conduct. Accordingly, the Board issues this Consent Order of Public Reprimand, with the understanding that Ms. Copeland has initiated and agrees to continue counseling for the period of time determined by her licensed counselor. This Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be reported to all school districts in South Carolina and maintained as a public record in the Office of General Counsel.

South Carolina State Board of Education

/S/ Joe Isaac
Joe Isaac, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 12, 2006

I, Tammy M. Copeland, S.C. Educator Certificate 172054, do hereby agree to this Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of two pages, and understand that this Order will be presented as signed to the State Board of Education on April 12, 2006.

/S/ Tammy M. Copeland
Tammy M. Copeland

3/30/06
Date